

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

April 30, 2003      LB 411

CLERK: Senator Kruse would move to amend, AM1617. (Legislative Journal page 1529.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Kruse, to open on your amendment, AM1617, to LB 411.

SENATOR KRUSE: Mr. President and members, thank you. The yellow sheet which is being passed around as we speak gives the language of this amendment. It's not really worth looking up on your gadget. I'll read it to you right now. On page 4, line 4, strike the new matter and retain...reinstate the stricken matter. In other words, return to the original language of the statute. The green sheet that you received a few minutes ago notes that this is the Ribicoff amendment. Senator Ribicoff, national senator, urged that Medicaid be extended for 19- and 20-year-olds in order to provide health care for persons that had been in foster care. The thought on this was that young adults, who do not have a family, do not have access to healthcare. And so we can give this modest sort of way of being an extension or being their...continuing to be their family for a couple of years. As it has developed, it of course continues to provide for those who have been in foster care, but by far the largest number of them are other young adults who are low-income, which is about 3,000 persons. Now that's the background of it, and there's also been references made to it. It is a Medicaid feature. I'm not going to debate the merits of the Ribicoff. I'm not going to talk about Ribicoff kids. I'm not going to ask you to feel sorry for anybody or try to support anybody. I'm just rising to talk about dollars. I'd rather put you into the situation of a difficult cut. You decide whether this is a good cut. I will informally anoint all of you as members of the Appropriations Committee. We can be an Appropriations Committee of the whole. You are there. You are under the gun to cut our state budget, and this issue comes before you. That's the way it was for us in the Appropriations Committee and you're going to ask after awhile did we...where's the funding, the balancing funding? Well, that's another reality of being on the Appropriations Committee. You're not offered revenue. Nobody comes in there offering revenue. They just say come up with a budget that's realistic. So I put this